

Kylee Maloney Award Ceremony

Thursday, September 14, 2006

Distinguished visitors and friends and fans of Kylee Maloney: Welcome to the American Embassy! It's a great honor and a pleasure for us to host this award ceremony for Kylee upon her return from the main event in Los Angeles, where Kylee received a Voice Award in just the second annual award ceremony.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services and the Writers Guild of America West established the Voice Awards in 2005 to honor entertainment industry writers and producers who have given voice to people with mental health problems by incorporating empathetic and accurate portrayals of mental health issues in their work. Those honored with the awards the first year included Larry King and the popular television series, *ER*.

Kylee was invited to Los Angeles to receive her award this year for her work as the producer and presenter of National Radio's *One in Five* disability issues program. The award citation extolled in particular an interview of Canadian artist, Victoria Maxwell, who has dramatized her experience with mental health problems in a one-woman show entitled "Crazy for Life." Kylee's interview of Victoria Maxwell is a marvel of understanding and sensitivity; and Maxwell joined Kylee in Los Angeles at the award ceremony.

We wanted to share Kylee's success with her audience here in New Zealand. This award is a reminder of the close ties that link the United States and New Zealand – both in the creative arts and in our policies that respect the dignity of the human person and the rights of disabled individuals. To mark this occasion, I wish to present Kylee with a certificate of recognition from the American Embassy. [Read the award to the audience] Congratulations, Kylee!